Lake County has famous neighbors in the appellation known as the North Coast. With Napa County to the South, and Sonoma and Mendocino Counties to the West, few people feel the need to trek farther to the area we call home.

As you might expect, this stings a bit. But, rather than sulk, STEELE offers up “The Out Kaste”, an all-Lake County red blend, to show those who venture forth there, are rewards yet to be found.

TASTING NOTES

This wine’s brooding nose gives hints of black pepper, raspberry, and cobbler with turbonado.

The first sip brings on a bramble patch of blackberry, cassis and spices. A swirl and second sip yields toasty oak notes and a keen edge of cocoa. A hint of rhubarb pie surfaces in the plummy finish. Exciting and delicious now, this puppy will age for years to come.

The blend for “The Out Kaste” changes from year to year dependent on the creative flow of the winemaker. While the 2010 version was predominantly syrah based, this years’ offering leads with almost 53% zinfandel, with smaller amounts of syrah, tempranillo, petite sirah, and petit verdot to complement.

Serve with comfort foods such as BBQ ribs, Yankee pot roast, roasted tomato bisque, or go wild with elk or bison. For a sweet aside, try a chocolate truffle.